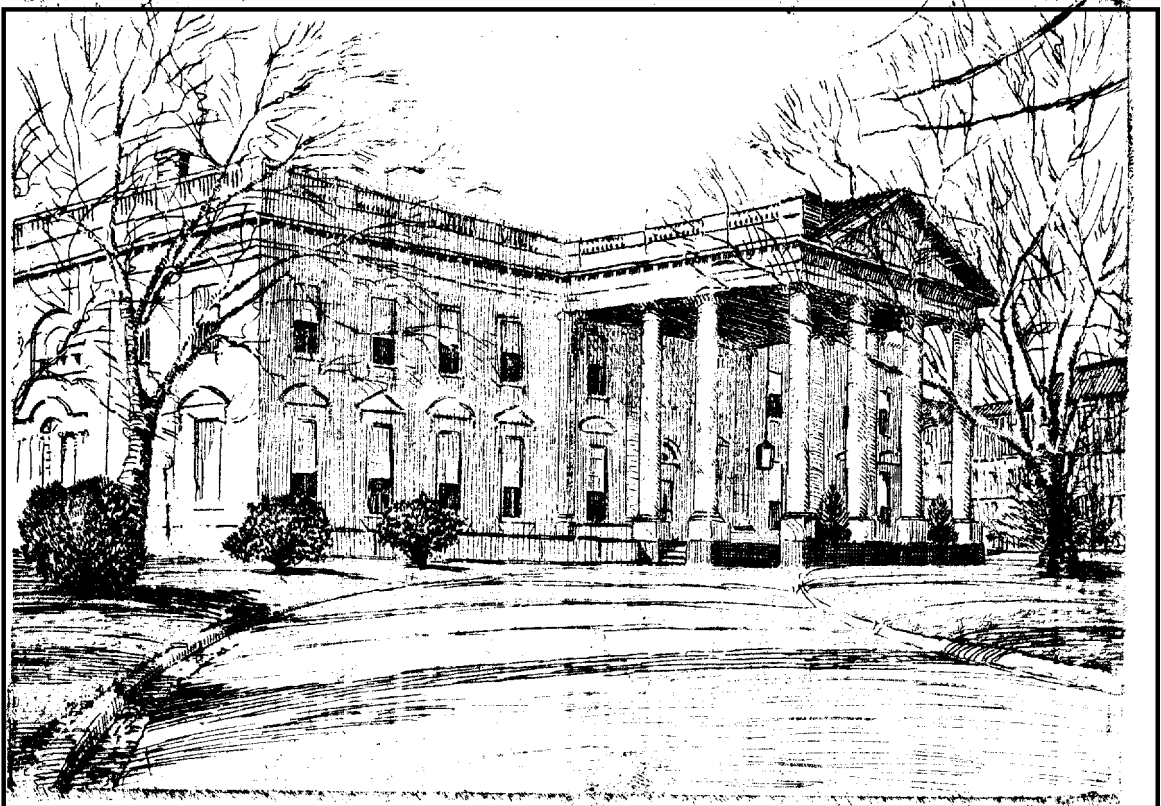


STENOTYPE TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS CONFERENCE

JULY 13, 65

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The White House
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PRESS CONFERENCE NO. 46

of the

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

1:00 P.M.
Tuesday
July 13, 1965

In the East Room
At The White House

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

Secretary McNamara and Ambassador Lodge will be leaving tomorrow evening for Saigon. When they return next week, we will give careful consideration to their recommendations, as well as those of Ambassador Taylor and General Westmoreland. We will do what is necessary.

The present center of the struggle is in South Viet Nam, but its root cause is a determined effort of conquest that is directed from Hanoi. Heavy infiltration of North Vietnamese forces has created new dangers and difficulties in South Viet Nam. Increased aggression from the North may require an increased American response on the ground in South Viet Nam. Increased aggression from the North continues to require very careful replies against selected military targets in North Viet Nam.

Meanwhile, General Westmoreland has the authority to use the American forces that are now in Viet Nam in the ways which he considers most effective to resist the Communist aggression and the terror that is taking place there. These forces will defend their own bases. They will assist in providing security in neighboring areas and they will be available for more active combat missions when the Vietnamese Government and General Westmoreland agree that such active missions are needed.

So it is quite possible that new and serious decisions will be necessary in the near future. Any substantial increase in the present level of our efforts to turn back the aggressors in South Viet Nam will require steps to insure that our reserves of men and equipment of the United States remain entirely adequate for any and all emergencies.

Secretary McNamara and Ambassador Lodge will concern themselves also with the political and economic situation. We have had Mr. Eugene Black visiting Southeast Asia and he has given me an oral report on his encouraging visit to that area. We mean to make it plain that our military effort is only a necessary preliminary to the larger purpose of peace and progress.

In the Dominican Republic, Ambassador Bunker and his colleagues are continuing their skillful and determined effort to find a peaceful solution. We believe as they do that, it is urgent that a solution be found and found promptly. We are encouraged by indications that leaders on both sides are prepared to stand aside in favor of a new government which will enjoy the confidence of the Dominican people as a whole. Those on both sides who show good will and who join a new government in the work of restoring peace will deserve the thanks of all of their countrymen. Right now here we are both cautious and hopeful.

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